

Antique Collectors Seek Unusual Array of Items

T.H. Trib-State 5/14/67.

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

What are antiques? This is one of the most frequently asked questions, and I'm taking this means of answering it for as many readers as possible. Antiques are things which belonged to a former age, and which now are scarce or rare.

The United States Customs set 1830 as the dividing line. Before this date everything was hand-made, not machine-made. However, they make two exceptions. Rugs and violins need not be dated prior to 1830 to be classed as "antique."

When the average person goes "antiquing" they are usually not looking for items that old—back to 1830 would be 137 years old! Many people are searching for another item in a particular collecting category.

Collecting postage stamps is still first in popularity. Second is coins, third is seashells and fourth is autographs. Then come match book covers, dolls and glass and china. You name it, and there is someone collecting it!

Indian Head pennies were made from 1859 to 1909. The face on this coin is that of a small girl, Sarah Lonacre, the daughter of the chief engraver of the U. S. Mint in 1859. Three Indian chiefs were chosen to pick the face on the coin, and they selected Sarah and presented her with the Indian bonnet she wore to form the face of this famous penny.



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Stamp collecting, the most popular hobby in the world, began in 1840 when Great Britain issued its first stamp. The United States issued its first in 1847. It was a ten-cent stamp with a picture of George Washington. It was to be used on two-sheet letters. There was a five-cent stamp for one-sheet letters.

Pattern glass is pressed glass. The machine which pressed the pattern in molten glass was invented in 1827. There are over 1,000 designs, each being in one of five classes—animal, fruit, flower, geometric and historical. Cup plates are favorites to collect because of their small size.

Doll collectors need to remember that sewing machines were invented about 1847, so prior to that time, most dolls were hand-made. If your doll has no heels on her modeled-on shoe, it probably was made before 1860. Swivel necks appeared after 1860. If the hair was stuck on the head by plaster, it would be 1830. The subject is such a complicated one that many books have been written to help collectors identify their finds.

Bruce Catton once said—"Everything that we do in America is built on the lives of people we ourselves never saw. Our homes, food, clothing, schools, jobs . . . the games we play and the songs we sing, the very ideas we have about ourselves and the world we live in—all these have grown out of the things millions of Americans did in a time before our own."

When we try to find out how these people lived we are really trying to find out what we ourselves are all about—history need not be dull—it can be entertaining as well as instructive.

Really Nothing New

I have two small "red top" glass pitchers in my own collection. One is dated 1901 and has "Terre Haute Street Fair" inscribed on it. The other pitcher is exactly the same pressed glass pattern,

but was purchased in 1946 at the Indiana State Fair. Only 45 years separates these two items, but their likeness points out that there is really nothing new.

In Ecclesiastes we find the following: "... the thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there

anything whereof it may be said, see this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us."

People collect labels on beer bottles, old Bibles, auto license plates, Indian arrowheads, jet bead jewelry, Valentines, penny banks, weather vanes, wooden kitchen utensils, butter molds, lead toys, hinged keys, coal mining items and bitters bottles.

I like items pertaining to Terre Haute history. I have a carved wooden letter opener made from one of the walnut fence rails that used to enclose Collett Park. Cut nails, made right here in Terre Haute, are useful to collect. They can be used to restore antique furniture and picture frames. A gilded cherub that used to adorn an antique French clock is now being used as a decorative paper weight. Small antique items can be useful in more ways

than they were originally intended.

Back in the eighties antique shops were called curiosity shops or bric-a-brac shops. They were usually cluttered little stores that became popular about the time of the Centennial Exposition in 1876. Many specialized in items of great antiquity with items at least two hundred years old.

The museum still needs some of the tiny tin clips used as candle holders for the Christmas tree. We don't have quite enough for a large tree. In fact, any old Christmas ornaments would find a yearly display home at the museum. Contact this writer if you have any of these needed items.

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AP NEWSPAPERS
TERRE-HAUTE-STAR

American Heritage Material Attracts Many Collectors

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Everybody today is culture-conscious of American Heritage material. The old family homestead has all but disappeared; grandmother's attic relics rest now largely in public and private museums; yet despite today's lack of time and space for huge accumulations, many people still maintain a satisfying identity with their past through reading.

Because of this, there is a surge of decorator and collector interest in old children's books. A growing number of libraries, museums and private collectors are now starting to acquire representative samples of all the best book illustrators of the 19th and early 20th centuries. A few collectors want to frame the color plates, but most want to preserve such books intact.

This new decorative trend in collecting was first noticed by observing the high prices which color plates by Kate Greenaway, Walter Crane and Arthur Rackham were bringing in the Rare Book Market and New York Auction Galleries. Make no mistake, the buying and selling of old children's books is a new collecting field that is just coming into its own.

How much is a Howard Pyle, Winnie the Pooh, and Wizard of Oz original worth?

The Victorian period boasts such great names as Kate Greenaway, Walter Crane, Beatrix Potter, Richard Caldecott, Arthur Rackham and Thomas Bewick with their delightful sentiment and sweetness,



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bold and exquisite line, lovely color and "joie de vivre."

Dr. Larry Freeman, internationally known authority on Victorian antiques, has revised his classic book, "Light on Old Lamps," originally issued in 1944. His new book, "New Light on Old Lamps," is truly a collector's history and guide covering lighting devices from the grease and coal oil lamps of the early 19th century to the gas and electric fixtures of Edwardian times. It covers the subject from Betty lamps to Tiffany shades.

Dr. Freeman's new book on Victorian silver tells of hollowware and flatware, sterling and plated, but also is a social history of the Victorian homes. The Victorian era extended over those first 40 years precious year from the marriage of Queen Victoria and the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition to the sad demise of her "dear Albert," the Prince Consort.

For the laboring man and his family, the Industrial Revolution brought relief to a drab life and for those who worked and got ahead, it allowed endless small refinements in furnishing a home.

Mass production of articles that used to be made entirely by hand craftsmen such as electro-plated silver caused Victorian tables to suddenly become a dazzling array of silver utensils and fanciful serving pieces.

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Victorian Tastes Prevalent

Englishmen and their American cousins set their tables with elaborate tea sets, castors, epergnes and fancy fruit baskets of plated silver. These are the items that are being sought after again at the antique auctions and sales. Proud buyers then clean them up and display them in their worn antiqued state or have them newly silver-plated and made to look like original pieces.

Other examples of Victorian taste that are now back in favor are wax and shell work, Berlin wool work, painting on velvet, glass and leather, papier mache and puro-

graphy. Some people collect Victorian battle scenes, while others collect Victorian social and political satire of Nasby (Lincoln's favorite anti-copperhead humorist) and Nast (known as the conscience of the corrupt Reconstruction Years.)

Blue decorated stoneware is also the coming rage in an-

tique collecting circles with prices rising rapidly.

Old bottles continue to be very desirable — the flasks, whiskies, bitters and other medicinals, household bottles, perfumes and figural bottles.

Iridescent glass is much sought after — the Aurene, Tiffany and Carnival all bringing top prices. Pattern glass will always be hunted out as its popularity seems to stay more stable than other categories. Cut glass is a continuing interest of many.

Antiques enhance a home because of their beauty, utility and versatility. They were made to last and are durable with the proper care. They do not become outmoded as do modern pieces, and they are a "good investment."

Many obsolete items now have novel uses, such as using dough trays for lamp tables and sea chests for storing

blankets or out of season clothing. Women are known for their love of shopping, and going "antiquing" is a fun way to do a lot of shopping with a little buying. Then there's the fun of restoring, repairing, renovating and cleaning whatever antique one has purchased.

I'm a firm believer in starting children on the road to collecting. When they attend auction sales and shows they soon show a preference for some one item of class of items to collect, and when they've saved their allowance to buy the second item of a collection you know they're "hooked" on what may be a continuing interest during their entire lifetime. Some of the items children of my friends collect are stamps, coins, lead soldiers, iron toys, baseball items, figurines of animals (I collect foxes!), dolls, post cards, pencils, autographs and comic books, to name only a few.

Handmade Lace Deserves Collector's Attention

4-13-69

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By DOROTHY J. CLARK

It has been said that "nothing is too small, too important, or too queer but that someone somewhere collects it."

This statement certainly includes lace collectors. They haunt second-hand shops, garage sales, auctions, Goodwill and Salvation Army stores hoping to find a bit of old lace on an item of wearing apparel, table linen, bed linen, or in an old sewing basket or scrap bag. Valuable laces have been found on doll clothes and as edging on handkerchiefs.

A well-made lace was used again and again as long as it held together. Many times a section of lace has survived several generations of brides on their veils or gowns. If a gown became worn or unfashionable, the trimmings including lace were carefully ripped off and after freshening, were sewn on a new dress.

The art of lace-making is older than written records. Our Bronze Age ancestors used decorative knotted braids and mesh-like fabrics to trim their garments.

In Ancient Egypt and a little later in Ancient Rome, a form of lace developed by pulling threads in woven fabric and then knotting and interweaving them.

However, the first true lace worked entirely with needle and thread did not make its appearance until the 1500's in Italy. At the time needle



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point lace began in Italy, an entirely different process using a pillow and bobbins commenced in Flanders.

First a design was pricked out on parchment or dark paper. The pattern was then attached to a double layer of cloth thus making a firm surface on which to work. The design was outlined with button hole stitches by sewing through the pin-pricked holes and through both layers of cloth.

When the designs were completed they were separated from the paper and connected together by a fine background of net or bars in order to produce the finished lace. Today, almost all the needle point laces are made on a Leavers Machine which was invented in 1813. The best known are Alencon (a lonh sonh) and Point Venise (pwanh ven ise).

The original handmade bobbin lace (commonly called pillow lace) started with a pin-pricked paper pattern firmly placed on a pillow. The lace maker then stuck pins into certain holes of the pattern, leaving half of each pin standing clear, thus forming the frame work around which thread was crossed, twisted, braided and ultimately woven into design and ground.

The carved wooden or ivory bobbins were weighted in order to pull the threads taut. Today, almost all bobbin laces are also made on the Leavers Machine. The best known are Chantilly (shonh tee yee) and Valenciennes (va lonh see en).

Most of the early lace was produced in convents and because of its intricate designs and detailing were very time-consuming and handmade lace was scarce and expensive. Lace became a symbol of prosperity.

Lace came to America about 1750 to beautify the wardrobe as well as the home. It had been used for church decorations and vestments from early times.

Some other terms collectors of lace must know are "galloon" which is lace with scalloping on both edges; "vraie" pronounced vre, which is the French term for real or handmade lace; "picot" (pe ko) which is a loop or loops used to decorate brides on the edge of lace; "brides" which are bars, used to fill background space in the design; and "Beading" which is a type of lace with small holes for threading ribbon.

Lace Valuable

Real lace, handmade, was used for many things other than wedding veils. Fortunately indeed is the person who finds a Mechlin, rose point, or Brussels lace wedding veil first worn by a bride in the 1790s or 1800's.

During the 1800's, good lace was used on the caps generally worn by grown women

indoors, on fichus, collars, some aprons and handkerchiefs.

Battenberg lace, for example, might edge a hanky or set off a luncheon set or bureau scarf. Dainty, fine lace also was essential on christening robes.

Although a later addition to handmade laces, Irish crochel lace is being collected. Who knows when it may again become the height of fashion?

The word "lace" may mean a braided cord or string used to fasten parts of clothing. It may be a shoelace or a sleeve lace, or a gold braid used for trimming clothes or hats. The making of lace, as we know it, came from two much older arts — knotted fishing nets and embroidery.

There are many variations of these basic types of handmade laces. Armenian is a narrow knotted lace made with the needle. Tatting is a fine edging made with a shuttle.

Handspun linen thread was used for most of the early handmade laces. Silk was used for very fine laces. Hair sometimes formed the stiffening for raised designs in needlepoint laces. Later machine-made cotton thread was used.

The finest machine-made laces today are made in Europe, especially in England and France. The lace mills of the United States are chiefly in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

On modern lace machines weighing about 15 tons, as many as 600 widths of narrow laces may be woven at one time on this loom. After bleaching, dyeing, and finishing, these narrow laces are separated into single widths by pulling out a single thread that joins the strips.

Another type of lacelike material is made by the Schiffli embroidery machine. Burnt-out laces are made by embroidering the lace design with one type of thread on a background of another material and then using chemicals to destroy the background material, leaving the lace design intact. A far cry indeed from the handmade fine laces so avidly sought by present-day collectors.

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Old Bookmarks Catching On As Collector's Item

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The subject of antiques in general seems to be a most interesting topic of conversation these days. However, since it is impossible for one person to collect everything (although I know some people who try!) a favorite category must be chosen.

A collection of bookmarks can be very interesting. They're small, easy to display and store, require little upkeep, and need not be endlessly dusted or polished.

Bookmarks can be placed in scrapbooks, framed under glass, and even used for their original purpose of marking their owner's stopping place in a currently read book.

Sometimes a collection begins with one bookmark found in the old family Bible, or great-grandmother's prayer book. Perhaps it was made of lustrous real ribbon, hand painted, its fringed edge an inviting reminder of a favorite passage or text? Or tucked away between the thumb pages of a much-loved book of poems, marking an inspiring verse?

When admiring these little treasures, one quickly senses their intimate association with grandmother's day. Could it be that readers in those days so loved their books that markers were useful in helping the readers squeeze every ounce of happiness from the contents? Speed reading was never thought of in those days—before the soporific television screen replaced the reading habit.

The little bookmarks were as varied in design as were the books in which they were used. They served a two-fold purpose: first as a marker for the book, and, second, as a sentimental little gift.

While the ribbon or streamer with hand-painted decorations was in wide use, probably of far greater popularity was the type of ribbon to which a printed colored card was attached in the center. Invariably the card carried a verse or message of greeting, and, it must be admitted, the wording sounds old-fashioned and reserved today.

Most collections are divided into Historical, Political, Practical, Sentimental, and Religious items, a simplified way of classifying.

The historical category includes the Civil War period, reunions of the Blue and Gray, Spanish-American War, and World War I. Many were issued for local celebrations. As a rule, markers of a historical nature were not given to flowery designs or colorful displays, but were intended primarily to commemorate dates and events.



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Practical Varieties

The practical ones are made of silver, bone, brass, ivory, ribbon, leather and paper. Many have clips at the top to prevent slipping back into the book. A leather one reads, "This is where I fell asleep." The Practical category now includes modern ones made of vinyl and other plastic materials.

The sentimental bookmarks cover such occasions as weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas, New Year's

and Easter, and were used very much as remembrance cards of today. They answered a dual purpose—that of greeting, and as a year-round reminder of the donor.

Many were finished by hand, either embroidered or painted, and much skill was used in their perfecting. The more intricate cards were worked in sampler style on perforated cards. The perforations were often so minute that the embroidery was very delicate. This type dates

around the 1870s.

The wedding bookmarks run true to form, with quaint wording such as "Kindest wishes for your Undying Happiness."

The Christmas series is really the most interesting in many ways. Instead of our red and green holly and berry motifs, they showed wintry scenes of snow-covered houses and churches, leafless trees mounded on sky-blue, laven-

der or yellow ribbon.

The Easter or Religious bookmarks are exquisite, often forming Easter crosses with figures of angels, some bearing clusters of lilies, and all singing the Alleluia.

Many designs are simply stiff paper or cardboard, carefully die-cut in the form of crosses, heavily embossed with flowers. Violets seem to be a favorite. The celluloid crosses came into vogue later, with their purple lettering on white, and long tassels of silk cord.

All bookmarks are memories of earlier days and furnish much enjoyment to the collector.

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Antique Collecting Has Become a Favorite Hobby

TRIB-STAR 10/25/70

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

There's something mystic about antiques. It's more than intrinsic value or beauty or age. An object that has been owned and cherished by other human beings for centuries develops a personality of its own that reaches out to you. It's like an old friend.

Antiques have character — a sense of history. Take, for instance, a book rack. You wonder where it's been — who owned it — what books it's held — who polished it faithfully. An English butler? A Massachusetts poet? An Ohio school teacher? A Hoosier bride?

Antiques cause their owners to peruse the dictionaries and encyclopedias for more information. For example, what is the difference between the wooden containers called noggins, piggins, and firkins? The noggin has a handle like a cup. The piffin has a stave, and is used as a dipper. The firkin is for storage.

Interesting but rather elusive items to collect are barber's bottles, those quite ornate containers for hair tonics, bay rum, and lotion which ornamented the shelves of the well-equipped barber shop in the Eighties and on into the Gay Nineties.

There is no collection quite so attractive as a well arranged group of these bottles showing the full glory of their bright colors and handsome decorations.

These bottles make a most colorful and interesting display, and they never fail to attract attention and questions.

Many people collect perfume bottles. Many also collect decanters and the flasks and odd bottles of early days. But it is surprising how few even know just what these are. When seeing them for the first time, many will exclaim, "But what are they? Are they vases?"

Barber's bottles come in many odd shapes, but all have the long neck. Some have a little bulge in the neck, thus facilitating work as the barber grasped the bottle and shook its contents over his customer's head. In those days it was mandatory that every customer leave the shop smelling highly perfumed and advertising to everyone he met that he had a fresh haircut or shave.

For a bright, pretty item to collect, one not too expensive, scarce enough to be interesting in the collecting, and one certainly intimately connected with a common enough phase of American life, let me recommend barber's bottles.



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another delightful category of glass to collect.

Someone has said, "That's what I don't like about antiques. Everything's so old!" Well, today's collectors have found to their sorrow that many so-called antiques are not old but clever reproductions that have been skillfully aged to fool the unwary. When in doubt it's best to beware.

Etageres, or Victorian what-nots, were designed for the display of curios or bric-a-brac and no Victorian parlor was considered properly furnished without one. They were most frequently of walnut or cherry wood, but many were of brass with shelves inlaid with marble or onyx. Those who are lucky enough

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Silver Glass Popular

Silver glass, a curious Victorian novelty, was introduced in American homes in the 1850s and enjoyed great popularity in its day. It was made in two layers. The clear glass was blown first, then nitrate of silver was blown into the hollow space between the layers through a hole in the base which was then sealed. Being very light weight objects they were usually filled with fine sand or grain of some kind, such as wheat, so they would be less apt to be tipped over. Many silver glass items were used as vases for dried grasses and flower arrangements in Victorian homes and are presently enjoying a revival. These are

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to have curio cabinets can keep such antique clutter behind glass doors and not have to dust so often.

When in doubt as to the antiquity of a piece of cut glass, one must remember that a lot of cut glass does not date back very far. Some pressed glass was made in imitation of the more expensive cut variety, and this also is confusing to the novice collector.

By running your fingers over the outside cut-pattern of the glass article, you will be able to feel the sharper difference between it and pressed-cut copies. Because the human hand is not as accurate as a machine, there will be tiny imperfections in the pattern. If the pattern is too exact it is a tell-tale sign that the glass was machine cut.

Buy whichever you like, but know the difference and don't pay the higher cut glass price for the less expensive pressed-cut variety out of ignorance.

If old cloudy glass does not respond to washing in hot soap suds, there are other methods to bring back the original appearance. First, try a strong alkaline solution of soda left standing in the container for a week. After washing this out with warm soap suds and there is no change, fill it with vinegar and repeat the process. Also try a strong, hot, soap solution in water and several spoonfuls of small steel (not lead) shot. Shake the container vigorously.

Gross' book, "Housewives' Guide to Antiques," advises that "if the glass is for display rather than for use, the frosted appearance may be

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rendered almost clear by the application of ordinary mineral oil or Canada balsam, which is applied by the use of cotton batting on the end of a bent wire. . . . Some glass will not respond to any method and is referred to as "sick glass" and must be discarded."

Helptul Hints Ottered to Today's Antique Collectors

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Clark, Dorothy

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

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Art experts and "antiquers" are of two classes: Those who prosper and those who travel in a rut. Right now some "rut-runners," overstocked with paintings or carnival glass (bought at this year's high prices) and unneeded books on 18th-century furniture, are badly worried about "recession."

The smart collector is more far-sighted. He closely observes and makes an intelligent study of Americana trends and so keeps a jump ahead of the game. He knows when the demand for certain collectables is likely to increase.

Books on antiques are the guides to the future. They provide timely practical information which enables one to profit in advance of the market rather than be stuck with just-pictured museum pieces. Such knowledge is buying power for collectors.

A hobby interest series now includes: THE COLLECTOR'S WHAT-NOT, an hilarious spoof on antique collecting written by Kenneth Roberts in 1923 and long out of print. The new edition, with an up-dated new introduction and 112 pages, is available from Century House.

Here's a sample from THE SECRET OF SUCCESS by Professor Kibgallene: "Mr. B., a collector of hooked rugs, has observed a fine specimen hanging on a clothesline beside a farm-



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house. Mr. B. descends from his car and approaches the farmer. Mr.: Sir, I am willing to pay quite a good price for an original she-calf in fair condition. I would pay \$350 for a really excellent she-calf. Have you such a calf? Farmer: Yes, but I wouldn't sell her under \$355. Mr. B.: Done at \$355! Go fetch her. But wait — I have nothing to wrap her in. It is customary in the city to wrap all purchased articles and besides she might take cold. Ah! There is a worthless old hooked rug. That will do. Farmer: Well, I don't know. That rug's worth somethin'. I'll have to charge you two dollars extry for the rug. Mr. B. (restraining his excitement, hands the farmer \$2 and removes the rug from the clothesline). Very well, I hereby purchase the rug; and upon second thought, I find I have no definitely pressing need for a she-calf now. Good morning and the best of luck to you!"

There are new books out now on all phases of antiques. The rare 1887 Hozen's PANORAMA OF PROFESSIONS has been re-issued. This was the first published description of eighty different occupations (agriculture, apothecary and architect to printer, stonemason and veterinary).

Dolls, games, toys, herb-growing, candlemaking, art-nouveau, jewelry, buttons, early American stencils and wall-painting, and houses are only a few of the subjects on which new books have been

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published recently. There are guides to cut glass, pattern glass, pitchers, Edwardian (Grand Rapids) furniture, crockery and silver settings for the 1880 table, and how to fix a player piano.

Victorian culture continues to rise in popularity. Freeman's book, VICTORIAN SILVER, relates that in Victorian times eating was an art and an ordeal.

Dr. Freeman presents the art in spades with hundreds of illustrations of silver services, flatware and the like. He even includes some whimsical shots of Victorian "en-familie" at the dinner table.

In between the pictures, he jots down some very pleasant chapters on silver-making, hallmarks and style with witty observations on entertainment during the age of Victoria and "Dear Albert."

The Victorian at the dinner table was stuffed (by as many as eighteen courses) and stuffy. "No elbows on the table," cautioned an etiquette coach whose charge retorted, "But some ladies in society to just that." The teacher replied, "Ah, my dear, but they know enough no to!"

The vast silver output of the period wasn't appreciated by collectors until rather recently. Now, of course, collectors are hooked, and there's much to interest them.

Big silver rushes during the Victorian era, sometimes made silver cheaper than sets of china. Every bride received the obligatory gifts of sterling.

There was enough to make ornaments such as napkin rings, table bells, finger bowls and the like, which have practically disappeared from the table today. To add to the confusion, craftsmen came up with special fish knives, ice cream forks and other limited-use pieces which made eating a chore of memorization.

Unfortunately, the era of gracious and splendid entertainment met with an insurmountable problem: the labor shortage. HARPER'S WEEKLY, of 1908 pointed out that "American housewives belonged to two classes — those who have servants and those who are trying to find them."

A new collecting fad, believed it, or not, is funerary art. And there's a new book on the subject. Organizing the collectible residual of death into ten categories with some mention of the reasons behind the original use or preservation of each type, the author begins with mausoleums, cenotaphs, tomb and cemetery ornaments. Then follows with coffin plates and casket trimmings; burial rings and jewelry; funeral advertisements; card supplies and services; mourning garb; mementoes of the dear departed; funeral conveyances and corteges; books, sculpture and pictures of burial sites, famous funerals and cemetery parks and collecting gravestone art and epitaphs.

These selections are mainly intended by the author to open the field to new collectors. If some artifacts are grim, others are rather humorous. Collectors will learn about wax flowers and hair wreaths, death masks and burial urns.

Rare coffin plates (with or without the decedent's name engraved thereon) come in many sizes and borders. Most common coffin plates used these phrases: "Rest in Peace," "At Rest," "Just Resting," "Peace" and "Do Not Disturb." One collector we know gave them to electric friends for use on the doors of their private offices. The going price is \$50 for silver ones. The better silver and brass 19th century coffin fittings are very hard to come by.

Funeral ornaments for the horse that pulled the hearse make an interesting collection, along with plumes and other mementoes of bygone funeralappings. Whether you save string, Old Masters, or like Karl Marx, nothing at all this is the most popular hobby. This collecting, in the country today.

Much History Is Revealed In Collections of Bottles

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

TS APR 21 1974

Much of America's turbulent cultural and political history can be traced through old bottles. Before the advent of modern, mass-produced glassware, manufacturers were quick to seize upon current trends and popular feelings for translation into colorful and highly individualistic flasks and bottles.

Early bottles were almost never thrown away, chiefly because of the expense of the early hand-made glass, and because a man grew attached to his personal flask. A drinker bought his flask and kept having it refilled from casks and barrels at his local whiskey merchants.

Since 1626 American glass makers have been combining artistry and wit to produce ingenious jugs in which men could contain their remedy for snake bite and the chills and fever of pioneer living.

America's first commercially successful glass plant was located in New Jersey. There are examples of free-blown bottles made in 1740 at the Wislerburg plant there.

It was during the War of 1812 that the United States glass industry started booming. Between 1815 and 1860 many flasks were made for Masonic and other special interest groups. Patriotic emblems on pre-Civil War bottles symbolized rising feeling of nationalism.



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Post Civil War period saw the rise of the bitters industry. "Nice" people drank bitters "for health reasons." Labels promised to cure anything, but the Pure Food Act of 1906 killed the bitters business.

The patent medicine mania in America included various sarsaparillas, tonics, elixirs, etc., of identical chemical or pharmaceutical composition of bitters, but yet not tagged with the specific "Bitters" title.

To accept the dictionary definition of bitters as "any medicine" would be to invite the collector to include bottles in almost astronomical numbers, for at one time the total of liquid medicinal preparations numbered 110,000 or more.

The origin of Bitters, a peculiarly American phenomenon, came from a shrewd understanding of the weakness of human nature for alcoholic stimulation — an influence of great social significance.

The true collector of Bitters bottles views his specimens as examples of fine American glass making from almost every famous American factory, for the demand for containers for Bitters was very great.

The human desire for physical health and comfort brought about the popular mass mania of consuming Bitters.

Regarding indulgence in alcohol as a sin, but willing to get the same effect from "medicine," the Victorians could imbibe Bitters and still live up to their code.

Originally, Bitters were le-

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gitimate stomachics or flavorings with an acid or bitter taste. Alcohol was necessary as a preservative, and the popularity of any given brand raised in proportion to the alcoholic content.

Bitters bottles come in all shapes, sizes and colors. A list of the twelve most desirable bitters bottles in order of their importance includes Traveller's, (supposedly the rarest of all — only three are known to exist), Jacob's Cabin Tonic, Carey's Grecian Blend, Whitwell's Temperance, S & B, Dinger's Napoleon Cocktail, Crimean, Cooley's Anti-Dyspeptic, Ben Franklin, Castilian, Landsberg's, and Blake's Tonic Bitters.

Square and rectangular bottles were most popular, but many were made in fancy contour forms, some cylindrical and oval, but only two brands of Bitters dared to offer themselves in the form of flasks.

As for color, Bitters bottles were most frequently amber, but also aquamarine, clear, green, blue and puce.

Old invoices show that commission houses, liquor dealers, druggists and fish dealers all had a hand in the distribution of Bitters.

Fancy form bottles included the pig, drum, globe, fish, Indian Queen, ear of corn, lighthouse, bust of Washington and the popular log cabin.

Americans had an amazing capacity to consume medicinal nostrums. They were subjected to continual newspaper advertisement of locally popular Bitters and fortunes were made by enterprising patent medicine makers. With a small outlay

of capital for bottles, alcohol, caramel coloring, and any combination of roots and herbs that could be boiled into a bitter brew that would not kill even if it did not cure, the product could be launched with the aid of a catchy name, or a loud-voiced harker on the tail-gate of a medicine show that traveled from town to town selling the 'bottles for one buck a piece.

Printing was cheap in those days and labels could be made showing an Indian maiden, famous person, with all the ailments that could be cured in very fine print. Even a President's wife — "Mrs. Pres. Cleveland" — allowed her photogenic charms to be used on an advertising card to give "Sulphur Bitters" a boost!

Because Terre Haute was a glass-making center in earlier

days, and because we had wineries, breweries, and whiskey-making distilleries here, bottles bearing the city's name turn up all over the country. We also made medicines such as Jack Frost Cream and Milk's Emulsion and many others here. Local druggists had their names and addresses formed in the glass bottles and containers which held their prescriptions. Bottle collectors have a ball in this area digging and classifying their finds.

Community Affairs File

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Cont. on back

The author, granddaughter of Joseph Richardson, often wondered why her grandfather decided to leave New York where he was well off and buy 22 sections of land in the Indiana-Illinois wilderness, investing over \$15,000, a fortune in those days. A short time after his purchase, government land grants were issued which brought the price of western land down to a much lower figure than he had paid. Even when he began harvesting crops there was no one in the vicinity to buy . . . at least not for ten years.

Soon Richardson began building flat boats which he loaded with wheat and corn and live hogs, engaged crews and floated downriver to New Orleans. There he sold his cargoes and boats and bought household supplies with the money -- urins, cloth, head gear, silks, muslins, cottons, shoes, barrels of sugar and molasses, spices, raisins, citron, kits of mackerel, coffee, tea and all kinds of liquors and wines. He returned by steamboat with enough of everything to make the family comfortable for a year, with ample margin for entertaining guests, for he was a very hospitable man. Joseph Richardson finally located at
More next week . . .

Coverlets Have a Fascinating History

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

TS APR 20 1975

The words "coverlid" and "coverlet" can be traced back to the 14th century, but the accepted present day term is coverlet, the name given a woven bedspread. Many people confuse the quilt with the coverlet, but they are entirely different even though used for the same purpose.

A quilt usually is made of three layers — a pieced or decorated top, a plain layer, with cotton batting placed in between the two. The three layers are sewn together with tiny stitches in an overall pattern.

A coverlet is woven of wool yarn as the weft thread, and either cotton or linen as the warp thread. Since wool took dye very well, the earliest colors were indigo blue and madder red. These dyes were expensive because they had to be imported, indigo from Egypt and madder from Asia Minor through France and Holland. European immigrants brought natural indigo to the United States and commercial dyes replaced the natural dyestuffs as early as 1806.

Early settlers dyed their own wool until it was possible to take it to a professional dyer. Recipes for dyes were recorded in family account books, and favorite weaving patterns were treasured family heirlooms and handed down from generation to generation.



DOROTHY J. CLARK

In the 19th Century, wool was often dyed by professionals, and it was

not long before mills were established and yarn could be bought already spun and dyed. Design drafts were as treasured as dye recipes and were passed on to friends, moving from one area to another as the people moved west. Names for specific patterns varied from state to state and often more than one name became connected with a given coverlet nomenclature.

The Jacquard attachment for the hand-loom was brought to this country in the 1820's. Since this mechanism

was expensive and required great technical knowledge to operate, and would not have been used in the average home, professional weavers trained in Germany, England or Scotland found ready employment in the United States. Some worked for a while in Eastern textile mills, and then journeyed west. Others went directly to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois or Iowa. In general, they settled in small towns or rural areas and did work for the surrounding communities.

Professional weavers wove into each coverlet their own names, initials, or trademark, the owner's name or initials, and the date and name of the place where the coverlet was woven. Such inscriptions were usually repeated in the two bottom corners, although sometimes they were placed in all four corners. In the 19th century, ochre, green, yellow, pink and brown were added to the predominantly blue and red color repertory used earlier.

The home-loom was limited to weaving simple patterns, so the professional weaver was very welcome in a community where he set up his loom and wove coverlets for the women according to their choice of color and pattern. The women usually provided their own wool yarn.

Coverlets, for the most part, fall into five categories — Overshot, woven on a hand-loom with four harnesses; Summer & Winter, a reversible fabric with the lighter design side for summer and the darker design side for winter; Multiple Shaft, woven on a hand-loom with more than four harnesses; Double Cloth, woven in two distinct fabric layers at the same time using two sets of warp and two sets of weft at all times; and Beiderwand, a German term for a compound weaving structure which combines warp-faced plain weave with weft-faced plain weave which reverse themselves throughout the fabric.

The great era of coverlet weaving ended with the Civil War, when the demand for mass production forced the

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over

Dorothy Clark

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individual entrepreneur out of business. Many New York and Pennsylvania weavers moved to Canada and others turned to different occupations or moved west as far as Illinois and Iowa. At the time of the Pennsylvania Centennial in 1876, an attempt was made to revive coverlet weaving, but inferior results were produced by the reliance on patterns for patriotic and commemorative designs taken from a variety of media such as prints and floor carpeting which were never intended for coverlet weaving.

The great concern for speed and mass production caused the replacement of the handloom with Jacquard attachment by the power loom; the once carefully prepared dyes were superseded by aniline dyes; and even the wool was frequently reprocessed.

Terre Haute's only professional coverlet weaver was Frederick A. Kean, who lived east of town on a farm where Calvary Cemetery is now located. Kean Lane is named for this property. He signed his coverlets in the corners "Made by F. A. Kean" above a basket of flowers and he would weave the date below the basket. His known coverlets date between 1838 and 1851.

In the catalog published for the Woven Coverlet Collection showing at The Art Institute of Chicago, some 154 coverlets were described and

photographed. One of Kean's coverlets was included. It was made in 1847 and described as natural and light blue cotton warp, natural cotton with blue, red and green wool weft. Two loom widths were joined to form a 96x88-inch coverlet complete with fringe. This was a Reiderwand type, woven on a handloom with Jacquard attachment.

Another of Kean's coverlets made in 1854 can be seen on display at the Historical Museum, 1411 S. 6th St. Displayed with it is one of his weaving patterns drawn on paper.

All About Bottles: A Collectors' Guide

TS JUN 22 1978

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Old bottles are continually turning up when excavation is done for construction of homes, industries, roads, ditches, etc. Before the days of trash pickup, debris was buried in all sorts of unusual places used for public and private dumping.

For some unknown reason, any bottle dug up from the ground is believed to be ancient and terribly valuable. In a few rare cases this is true, but ordinarily, bottles are found to be of little or no value and of fairly modern times.

To better answer questions of bottle finders, the Vigo County Historical Society has compiled information on early brewers, bottlers, soda pop manufacturers and bottlers.

The first Terre Haute City Directory published in 1858 shows there were four brewers here: John M. Bergholtz, on N. 7th St.

south of the canal; G. and H. Glick on Ohio St. between 1st and Water Sts. who advertised "extensive supply of ale and beer constantly on hand;" Albert

Hertwig, corner of 8th and Poplar; and M. Mogger, corner Bloomington (Poplar St.) and Canal (9½ St.).

At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, there were four listed, Glick, Hertwig, Mog-



DOROTHY J. CLARK

ger, and Max Reesman, on N. 7th between Canal and Railroad who had replaced Gergholtz.

By 1872 all names had changed and one more was added. They included E. Biehmel, corner 9th and Poplar; M. Easter, south side Ohio, east of 1st; C. A. Imberry, N. 7th between Canal and Chestnut; A. Mayer, Poplar near 9th; and C. Weust, at 203 S. 1st St.

Two years later, Weust was not listed, and Ernest Bleemel had a more correct spelling; Moses Easter's listing was changed to west of 1st St.; and C. A. Imberry was at the northwest corner of 7th and Linton (5th Street north of Main). A. Mayer was located

on the south side of Poplar east of 9th St.

In 1877 we find the first mention of a bottler in the city directory. Stark & Hay had a bottling works in the west side of 15 N. Main St. Two brewers, M. Easter, 23 Ohio, and Anton Mayer, 913 Poplar, were listed.

Two years later, C. Stark owned the bottling works at 12 N. 15th St. Another brewer had begun business Reinhold Klamt, on the west side of the Prairieton Road near the city limits.

In 1880, Anton Mayer still had the brewery, but was also listed as a bottler; as was C. Stark. A new brewer, Kinzie Feyh & Co., 23 Ohio, was listed along with Klampt.

The 1881 directory carried a picture of Mayer's Lager Beer Brewery, the only brewer or beer bottler listed. This issue also carried the first listing of Soda Water Manufacturer Christ Stark, at 12 N. 15th St.

In 1882, Stark had moved to 200 S. 9th St., and in 1883 had a competitor, Seibt & Co., 1012 Main St. E. Duenweg was listed as a beer bottler on the southeast corner of 6th St. and the Van Railroad.

In 1884, Duenweg was listed as beer agent and beer bottler, J. T. Staff, 22-24 S. 3rd St., was also a beer agent. Mayer's Brewery was still in existence, and there were two beer gardens — Canandaigua, 21 S. 4th St., and G. Nicolai, 645 Main St.

For the first time, the categories of medicine manufacturer appeared. This was C. C. Trinkle, at the northeast corner of 3rd and Swan Sts. Buntin & Armstrong, 600 Main St., were listed as manufacturing pharmacists.

Changes in 1885 included the addition of Wyeth & Wyeth, 215 S. 9½ St., as soda water manufacturers and the makers of Birch Beer. G. Stark & Son operated a beer garden at 1011 Main St.

Other information of interest to bottle collectors concerns the Southern Brewery, owned and operated by Reinhold Klamt, on five acres on the Prairieton Road. It was in existence from 1870 to 1880. He was also (1888) agent for the Crescent Brewing Company, Aurora, Ind. Many of those bottles can be found in this area also. We have one on display at the Historical

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Dorothy Clark

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Museum with a nearly perfect paper label.

The Terre Haute Brewing Company, established in 1859 by Mathias Mogger, was sold and incorporated in 1889, closed during Prohibition and reopened in 1934 by Oscar Bayer. The majority of the bottles found in digging up old dump sites in the area are of this origin. They vary in size, shape and color according to age, which type of beer they held, and which glass factory made them.

There was a Terre Haute Brewery in existence in 1837, and according to newspapers of the time, it was sold in 1848 by Demas Deming and Chauncey Warren to Mr. Mogger. He added to it in 1857, again in 1866, and then died in 1868.

The Foster Brewery, built in 1853, was closed by the Internal Revenue in 1879 for six weeks.

Imberry's Brewery burned in 1874. Most of their product was loaded in barrels and shipped on the nearby Wabash & Erie Canal, so bottle collectors probably won't find this name inscribed on any old bottles.

The post-Civil War period saw the rise of the bitters industry. "Nice" people drank bitters "for health reasons." Labels promised to cure anything that ailed you, but the alcohol content only made the person feel better temporarily. The Pure Food Act of 1906 killed the bitters business. Now the bottle collector will pay most any price for certain unusual bitters bottles. However, the majority of the common bottles found in this area are of interest only to the beginning collector.

The Peoples Brewing Company bottled "Spalter" and "Celtic" beers at 1st and Wilson Sts. It operated only from 1906 to Prohibition, and so many of the bottles found now are from this brewery. Two excellent examples of these brands are on display at the Historical Museum for comparison studies by collectors.

Community Affairs File
**Historically
Speaking**

Ts AUG 8 1976

By DOROTHY J. CLARK



Composition daguerreotype cases are one of the interesting collectors' items of mid-Victorian minor art. These cases were also the first plastic products made in America.

Their covers are examples of the work of the best-known die makers of Victorian days. The shellac composition was similar to that used today in phonograph records, checkers, poker chips and electric light sockets.

The first daguerreotype cases were made of paper pressed in a mold in the same manner as papier-mache. The paper was then painted and varnished to imitate leather. William Shew, a daguerreotype artist of Boston, made these cases as early as 1844 with geometric, arabesque, and rose designs.

In 1846-47, Gordon and Stadley of Boston made a few scenic designs and a head of Washington. Other designs on paper cases included the Eagle and Flag, Birds and Vase, Urn, Lyre, Beehive, and various floral and conventional designs which were often used on composition cases. Paper cases were made at Scovill Manufactory before composition cases became popular.

Composition daguerreotypes were first patented in 1854, and continued to be made as late as 1880. Samuel Peck of New Haven, Conn., who had operated daguerroean rooms from 1846-51, was the first to patent the plastic case.

Peck's patent reads: "Improvement in manufacturing Daguerreotype cases. Patent dated Oct. 3, 1854. The boxes are made of a composition of shellac and sawdust or fibrous material with a suitable coloring matter, passed between hot rollers and when plastic, pressed into molds. Claim: Covering the surfaces of the composition with thin plates of burnished metal or paper previously to its being pressed in the die. The coating thus made gives the advantage of surfaces to paste the lining to and also a very neat metallic ornament at small additional cost."

Although this patent is listed as an improvement, it is the first plastic case patent recorded. In August, 1855, Halvor Halvorson assigned his patent, which included the use of gilded paper to strengthen the plastic, to Horace Barnes.

From 1855 to 1880, several more patents were recorded. The embossed velvet cushion was improved and the hinges were refined. Paper with a coating of a compound of water, potash and gelatine was used to make an imitation tortoise-shell wood or marble case.

Most of the brass mats that surround the picture and served as a frame were die stamped and often hand chased. Designs varied from geometric patterns, arabesques, and flowers and leaf borders, to drums, eagles, and other patriotic emblems. One design included flags and cannons in the corners.

The cases were lined with silk and stamped velvet, usually red, but occasionally gold or blue velvet.

An 1850 advertisement offered cases made of papier-mache or pearl inlaid, turkey morocco, with names embossed on the cushion.

The smallest plastic cases were small, locket-size round cases made to hold two portraits. These were two inches across and had screw-on tops. They were made in red, green and tan-colored composition, as well as the more common brown and black.

Oval and square cases with hinges are found in 2 x 2, 2 1/2 x 3, and 3 1/2 x 4-inch sizes. Some have patriotic scenes and animals. Octagonal and hexagonal cases with angled and curved sides are found in 5 x 6 inches. The largest cases are 7 x 9 inches, while long, narrow cases made for four portraits were made in 3 x 5, 3 1/4 x 6 1/4, and 2 1/2 x 4-inch sizes.

Many cases are signed by die sinker and can be identified from compiled lists of the best known. Most all were located in New York. The name of the die sinker increases the value and is an aid in dating the plastic daguerreotype cases.

Designs for cases included scenes from American history, sentimental compositions, mythological, religious, political, fraternal and patriotic scenes and designs.

Various trades are represented and scenes from popular fiction of the day, landscapes, flowers, shells, etc., were used. The designs were taken from pattern books of the era and are the same as those found on book covers, furniture carvings and

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various articles of bric-a-brac

Many of the designs were also used on plastic album covers, collar boxes and for plastic clock fronts.

The purist collector of daguerreotype cases tries to find examples of signed works in all the different patterns and styles. Others try to find as many examples, all different, and count them by the numbers not quality.

Still others take them apart and put in modern-day portraits of loved ones and exhibit them on wall and desk. Whatever direction the collector of these interesting examples of Victoriana takes, it is a challenging hobby and more fun than some collecting pursuits because there are still very good examples to be found in all sorts of fascinating places. Good hunting!

Stepping into the past

Community Affairs File

Tues JUN 8 1980

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark



Most people enjoy browsing through antique shops. I know I do. Going through the door is like stepping into the past. It's educational as well as a pleasure.

It is said that all friendly people are not antique lovers, but that all antique lovers are friendly people. Sometimes there's a sad element in browsing—an old workbasket with its half-finished work or an old chest with the words carved across the front "not to be sold except for bread."

Recently I saw an authentic "Roger's Group," signed "John Rogers, New York." The Civil War scenes depicted a young man placing an engagement ring on the finger of a young girl before going off to war. It was labeled "Parting Promise." The sculptor sent to Hannibal, Mo., for part of the clay used in his modeling. These rare pieces of statuary are rarely seen anymore except in museums. Their current price ranges between \$350 and \$950 in the catalogs.

There are vogues and fashions in antiques just as there are in anything else. For a time everyone was trying to acquire a castor set (or complete one), then Currier and Ives prints, and then anything made of iron. I've seen a fine example of a charcoal iron with a double-draft and chimney. Westinghouse has one just like it in their museum collection.

I watched a happy collector purchase a little "sparking stove," a smaller edition of the Franklin stove, whose purpose was to set the duration of a young man's call on his sweetheart. When the fire went out, he was supposed to leave. There was also a "courting lamp."

Smaller Homes

The smaller home of today influences the sale of antiques. The lower ceilings can't accommodate the towering old secretaries, corner cupboards, and canopied and tall poster beds. People consider first the usefulness and secondly the purely decorative use of antique furniture.

A short time ago there was a great demand for horsecollars to be used as amusing decorations in recreation rooms or as frames for mirrors. Few people buy antique horse collars for horses.

Many people still modify old wall telephones as cabinets for small radios, or torture antique objects of all sorts into table lamps as "conversation pieces." Surely people don't have to go to those lengths to find something interesting to talk about?

Committees are always looking for authentic antiques when historic homes are being restored.

First they look for a clock in keeping with the time period to set the tone of the room.

The oil paintings, family portraits, even the framed-under-glass hair wreaths lend a lived-in look to restored homes. Appropriate wallpaper is usually easy, but authentic floor coverings are very difficult to achieve. Window coverings can be duplicated, and furniture is available to furnish most any type room.

Collectors Increase

There is an increase in the number of occupational collectors now. Doctors collect anything to do with early medical practice. Advertising people collect calendar plates with advertising in the center, bakers collect early baking pans, men collect old scales and balances, etc. Old Valentines and scrapbooks are in demand, especially postcard albums and pictures of balloon ascensions.

Country store equipment continues in popularity. People want old twins holders, thread cases, candy jars, cheese-cutters, coffee-grinders, and all sorts of jars, boxes, baskets, barrels, bottles and jugs.

Collectors have to have a lot of space to purchase the old quilting frames like Colonial trestle tables when they're assembled, the early sewing machines, spinning wheels, yarn winders, or adjustable dressmaker's dummies.

Many people have inherited (or collected) sausage grinders and stuffers, cherry seeders, apple peelers, coffee mills, sad irons and all sorts of fireplace equipment from trivets, pots, kettles, spiders and pokers to popcorn-poppers.

China closets hold complete (or incomplete) sets of Haviland. Plate rails parade around rooms showing off collections of china, glass, pewter, porcelain or pottery.

One local antique show offered the tiny embroidered basques worn by the women of the Fresman family who had the jewelry store on the courthouse square in pioneer Terre Haute. These ladies were so tiny and dainty that even a child could not squeeze into the doll-like garments today.

There's no better way to understand and appreciate our ancestors than to study their tools and other possessions. The love of antiques goes along with the love of history and genealogy.

Toasters, trivets — collectibles

More and more books are being published to help beginning collectors understand what to look for in pursuing their hobby and how to identify some of the more obscure and puzzling items. Most are illustrated with photographs and drawings, both black and white and color.

The better guides offer much practical information on where to purchase items to fill out a growing collection and how to care for it and display it.

Twentieth-century cooks are just as fascinated by kitchen tools as were their ancestors. And even though ours is an age of electronic gadgetry, authors of "Kitchenware: A Guide for the Beginning Collector," point out that many of the ingenious and labor-saving inventions produced during earlier times—though changed in design—are still around today and being used for the same tasks.

Compare, for example, the manner in which colonists toasted bread in front of the fire on long-handled, wrought-iron toasting racks with today's fully automatic pop-up toasters, or the evolution of the iron from the 16th century box heated by metal slugs to today's sophisticated modern electric steam and dry iron.

Golden Press' Handbook of Collectibles Series has published Carnival Glass, Bottles, Stoneware, and now the fourth in the series, Kitchenware, all written by Regina Stewart and Geraldine Cosentino.

Filled with the fascinating information on the history of American kitchens and utensils from Colonial days through the early 1900s, Kitchenware covers a broad range of collectibles, as well as tracing the history and use of each implement, such as: apple parers, clothes irons, enamelware, food choppers, graters, trivets, toasters, coffee mills, and many more.

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

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Stoneware contains valuable information for collectors of American stoneware, such as crocks, jugs, churns, bottles and pitchers, all available today.

Intended for the beginning collector as well as for anyone who enjoys owning an occasional piece or two of American folk pottery, Stoneware offers practical suggestions on collecting, purchasing, caring for, and displaying this handsome and useful pottery. A list of potteries and potters and their operating dates help collectors identify and date their pieces.

One of the most interesting collections (and the heaviest) is of iron weights used in lieu of a hitching post or hitching rail in the days of the horse and buggy. A leather strap approximately four feet long, with a snap attached to each end, was fastened to the weight by one of the snaps and the contrivance was carried in the buggy.

When no other means of tying the horse was available, the driver lifted the weight by a strap, placed the weight in front of the horse, and snapped the other end of the strap to the bridle. A driver could leave any well-behaved, driving horse secured in this manner and be reasonably sure the rig would be in the same location upon his return.

From time to time someone brings up the question, often with tongue in cheek, as to the correct name for these weights. According to local collector, the answers would be "curb weights," "hitching weights" and "tether weights," not to mention what they were called when accidentally dropped on someone's toe.

Perhaps hitching weights would fit them best. The 1902-03 Montgomery Ward & Company catalog has a listing for "Hitching Weights, 16 lbs., price 50 cents." Try to buy one for that price now.

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An attic could acquaint one with

T MAR 14 1981
**Historically
Speaking**

By Dorothy Clark



It used to be that children (and their elders) had attics to explore and could while away rainy afternoons getting acquainted with their ancestors and all their keepsakes.

Now that Americans have become such a migratory people, they move from house to apartment, from town to town, and houses don't stay in one family generation after generation the way they used to.

The so-called clutter kept by earlier families is culled out to accommodate smaller houses or apartments without much storage space. It costs too much to move these days to allow for "stuff" that isn't necessary to daily living. Valuable relics go to museums (we hope), and much of what should be saved is burned or otherwise discarded. Pity.

Delving into old haircloth trunks or footlockers which have been closed so long that a whiff of dust, intermingled with the scent of lavender, or thyme, and maybe camphor or leaf tobacco (antidote for moths) almost stifles

one, is my idea or a pleasant way to pass some time.

Soon you find yourself sitting on the floor surrounded by forgotten finery, old daguerreotypes, lace bonnets and military ribbons.

Sadly you mourn with long-gone ancestors over the death of a small child when you find a box full of baby clothes, a lock of hair and tiny shoes. Pressed funeral flowers recall other deaths of loved ones, a bit of crape, or a yellowed obituary clipped from an earlier newspaper.

To those seeking family genealogy, it's nothing but frustrating to find unidentified photographs and undated letters, cards and obits, but it's all a clue and fits in some place on the family tree.

Some families keep receipted store bills, and it's possible to reconstruct daily life from these. If the ancestor was a storekeeper, the life of a small town is reduced to the purchases of its customers. The man of the house purchased pills, liniment and

whiskey, and his bill was only 45 cents. His good wife bought salt, some blue drill for overalls, some print for sewing, tobacco for grandfather who preferred cigars to the homemade twist. Molasses was only 15 cents a gallon, two pounds of the best coffee was only 25 cents, and tea cost more than anything at a dollar a pound. Great-grandpa paid \$3.25 for a pair of boots, but they were of real leather. His wife's shoes cost \$2. Thread was a penny a spool, and ten cents worth of peppermint candy was enough to go around.

During the summer months, some of the people were not as provident as others. They didn't raise chickens,

geese and turkeys, their potatoes didn't turn out so well, and their apple orchards didn't bear.

Looking over the shoulder of an old-time storekeeper while he jotted down in his ledger what they buy, we read that Joseph Ashmeade purchased one gallon of whiskey for 30 cents, three quarts molasses for 37 cents, and five cents worth of pepper. His wife, Heartsease, sold her geese to pay on the account, along with nine pounds of butter and three dozen eggs. Beer was five cents a quart, and 50 pounds of salt sold for 50 cents.

Erwine Ball bought five cents worth of paint and ten cents worth of turpentine, along with one quart of

beer. Was he fearful of painter's colic or intending to paint up the town?

His friend Bradbury Cottrell purchased a gallon of whiskey for 30 cents on the same day, so possibly he was going to have a helper.

The storekeeper sold whiskey for either 25 or 30 cents. Was it the grade of whiskey or the need of the customer that made the difference?

He came back the next day for 10 cents worth of castor oil and 25 cents worth of pain-killer. Other purchases included 20 cents worth of candy kisses, six cents worth of cloves and 20 cents worth of vermifuge. Old account books tell the story of a community.

Seriously though, what can people do with all the clutter in the attic if there's no one in the family left to cherish it? There are estate settle-

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ments, houses to be sold, and what happens to all this memorabilia when there's no one left to want it?

Papers, documents, books, diaries, bundles of letters, and all written materials and scrapbooks should be boxed up and offered to his local historian or the local museum for further evaluation. Trained and experienced people will know what is worth saving.

A good rule of thumb is not to throw away or burn anything in haste. Get someone else to look it over first. And whatever you do, don't pitch it and then tell someone after it's too late to salvage.

Families should keep their own memorabilia as long as there's a descendant left to care for it. After that it's time to scatter it to museums, libraries, antique shops, and to the trash fire. Happy attic-ing, all readers!

Clark, Dorothy
Religious to collect, W

Tracing roots through quilts

Ts OCT 14 1984 Community Affairs File

The history of America can be traced in old quilts. One of the variations of the Irish Chain pattern is called Burgoyne Surrounded, referring to an event in the Revolutionary War. The Pine Tree pattern is similar to the symbol used on certain early American flags.

The Log Cabin pattern reminded quilt makers of their first wilderness homes. Democrat Rose, sometimes known as Whig Rose, was named for the political party and is represented in several variations.

The quilt pattern called Tippecanoe and Tyler Too was the campaign slogan of William Henry Harrison when he ran for president in 1840. The Lone Star of Texas pattern recalls the struggles that took place in that state in the mid-19th century.

The history of chintz and the progress of both copperplate and roller printing on fabrics can be studied in old quilts. Sprigged chintz, dark-ground chintz and pillow prints can be found in early quilts.

Calicoes used in quilts include blue resist, lapis prints and manganese brown. Advances in dyes can be followed from homemade dyes and the overprinted green of the early fabrics to the fast and vivid colors of the present century.

Because cloth was so expensive, even the smallest scraps were used in quilts. Homespun backing was used. A wornout quilt was frequently used as the inner padding for a new quilted cover.

Historically speaking



Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Patchwork, by its nature, is best suited to geometric patterns. Triangles, squares and diamonds can be combined to make patterns as diverse as Irish Chain or any of the many star patterns. No matter what the pattern blocks, each is distinctive because of the choice of colors, border, and size of the design of the quilt maker.

Crazy quilts afforded the most economical use of scraps of fabric and became objects of great beauty when made with satin, velvet, plush and silk. Enhanced with silk, cotton and bead embroidery, these crazy quilts were destined to be framed under glass as works of art.

Among the quilts made as works of art rather than for use solely as bedcoverings are the appliqued quilts and the all-white stuffed quilts which depend on beauty of design and the skill with which it is executed.

Very attractive to the modern eye are the abstractions found in old quilt patterns. One patchwork quilt called Tents of Armageddon was made of more than 4,000 calico triangles which create an effect not unlike that of an optical illusion.

The names of the quilt patterns are very collectible. There's Chips and Whetstones, Medallion with Octagonal Star, Drunkard's Path, Falling Timber, Fool's Puzzle, Solomon's Puzzle, Wonder of the World, and Orchid Wreath.

Quilt patterns with Biblical names include Rose of Sharon, Star

of Bethlehem, Tree of Life, and Job's Trouble.

The Maltese Cross or Pineapple pattern was frequently found in the same quilt with Church Steps. Another favorite is Seven Sisters.

When quilt collectors Carrie C. Hall and Rose G. Kretsinger published their book in 1935, they reported knowing of more than 1,000 quilt patterns. There is no estimate of the possible number of variations on the traditional patterns or original designs.

Three years ago I came across a box of ancient quilt blocks of an unknown pattern. There were enough to create a quilt for a full-sized bed, so I passed the chore on to my longtime friend and excellent needlewoman, Eleanor Briggs Freeman, former Terre Hautean now living in Houston. An active member of a quilting circle, she tackled the challenge, and the resulting quilt is more than beautiful. Set together with deep, turkey-red plain blocks and stripes, it makes a cherished bedcover, more lovely than any bedspread. It shows what can be done with uncompleted projects begun decades ago by long gone ancestors.

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My maternal grandmother always had a quilt in process. She was always piecing, quilting or "finishing off" yet another quilt. As her eyesight dimmed, the colors were not always as perfectly placed in the pieced patterns as they used to be, but they were carefully stitched by touch. Before her death she had made quilts for each of her children, her grandchildren, and a few more in a lifetime hobby of quilt-making.

There's an old proverb that says that a woman makes quilts from her cradle to her grave. Little girls would begin to work on their first quilt top as soon as they could sew a straight seam. A girl was expected to have at least 12 quilt tops ready for quilting by the time she announced her wedding plans.

Friendship quilts were made of favorite blocks of friends who embroidered their names in the corners. The finished blocks were stitched together and another "quilting bee" was scheduled.

There were quilts used only for special occasions. Frontier homes had mourning quilts which were only displayed following the death of a family member. They remained carefully folded in cedar chests until they were needed. Midnight Star in black and white was frequently used for the mourning quilts.

Revolutionary relics

Washington collection passed to Rockville woman

One summer day a century ago, Col. Richard Wiggington Thompson was interviewed by a reporter from the Indianapolis newspaper, The Sentinel.

Smoking one cigar after another and enjoying the opportunity to talk with a stranger about memories of his long career, and his family, Thompson rambled on to the topic of George Washington.

He told of one of the finest collections of Washington relics in the country owned by one person in Indiana, the property (at that time) of Mrs. W. N. Wirt of Rockville. She was a direct descendant of Charles Washington, brother of the first president.

The daughter of Charles Washington, Fannie Washington married Col. Burgess Ball of Revolutionary War fame. Their daughter became the second wife of the father of Thompson.

This marriage resulted in George Washington Lafayette Thompson, who moved to Indiana in early days and left a daughter who became the wife of Dr. W. N. Wirt of Rockville.

Some of the most valuable of the many relics of Washington passed down this direct line of descent. Mrs. Wirt had the camp chest and contents which Washington carried with him during the entire Revolutionary War. He kept it until a

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short time before his death, when it was given to his brother, Charles.

This chest and its contents were gifts to Washington from Lafayette who brought it with him from France. It contained a set of unusual drinking cups of solid silver which were said to have been the solace of the war years during many a weary march. They may have even helped to ward off the cold during the winter at Valley Forge.

In the collection also were a pair of heavy gold eyeglasses in a silver case of curious workmanship which Washington wore for many years; a gold stock buckle; a set of gold shoe buckles with brilliants inserted in the intricate filigree

work; and a set of knee buckles of nearly the same pattern.

These were worn by Washington at state occasions and were adorning his person when he was inaugurated as the first president of the United States.

There were also a number of other articles, letters in his own handwriting, deeds for property signed by him, and various other things used by him for many years.

In addition to these valuable relics, Wirt's collection received some valuable additions from the estate of her aunt, Mrs. Littleton, who lived near Leesburg, Va., and who also was a descendant of Charles Washington.

As she had no children or direct heirs, her large collection of Washington relics descended to Wirt, making hers the finest collection in the country.

Littleton's collection included all the valuable family pictures and portraits, besides a large number of the articles used by the family of George Washington.

Thompson told a good story about the drinking cups in the Washington camp chest. When he was a boy, the chest was the property of his stepmother, the daughter of Burgess Ball, and the grandmother of Wirt.

Thompson had attended a performance by a sleight-of-hand artist. This was about 1819. One of the tricks was to apparently pass one cup through another, holding one in each hand.

This trick amazed young Thompson, and the next day he opened the old Washington camp chest and got out the silver drinking cups. Holding one in each hand, he hurled the other at it, but without success. Next, he tried to push one through the other, but also failed. For weeks he worked with those cups before giving up and deciding they were not the right kind.

Thompson often wondered what the immortal Washington would have said had he been able to witness the harsh treatment of his gift from Lafayette.

But the cups did survive the handling of the youthful "Dick" Thompson. When he was Secretary of the Navy in President Hayes' cabinet, he was fond of telling this story on himself.

This writer is curious as to the present whereabouts of this collection of Washington relics. Were they passed down from Wirt to her descendants? If anyone knows, please inform this writer.

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Bitters bottle business boomed

TS DEC 11 1994

Much of America's turbulent cultural and political history can be traced through old bottles. Before the advent of modern, mass-produced glassware, manufacturers were quick to seize upon current trends and popular feelings for translation into colorful and highly individualistic flasks and bottles.

Early bottles were almost never thrown away, chiefly because of the expense of early hand-made glass, and because a man grew attached to his personal flask. A drinker bought his flask and kept having it refilled from casks and barrels at his local whiskey merchants.

Since 1626 American glass makers have been combining artistry and wit to produce ingenious jugs in which men could contain their remedy for snake bite and the chills and fever of pioneer living.

America's first commercially successful glass plant was in New Jersey. There are examples of free-blown bottles made in 1740 in the Wisterburg plant there.

It was during the War of 1812 that the United States glass industry started booming. Between 1815 and 1860 many flasks were made for Masonic and other special-interest groups. Patriotic emblems on pre-Civil War bottles symbolized rising feelings of nationalism.

Post Civil War period saw the rise of the bitters industry. "Nice" people drank bitters for "health reasons." Labels promised to cure anything, but



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the Pure Food Act of 1906 killed the bitters business.

The patent medicine mania in America included various sarsaparillas, tonics, elixirs, etc., of identical chemical or pharmaceutical composition of bitters, but yet not tagged with the specific "bitters" title.

To accept the dictionary definition of bitters as "any medicine" would be to invite the collector to include bottles in almost astronomical numbers, for at one time the total of liquid medicinal preparations numbered 110,000 or more.

The origin of bitters, a peculiarly American phenomenon, came from a shrewd understanding of the weakness of human nature for alcoholic stimulation — an influence of great social significance.

The true collector of bitters bottles views his specimens as examples of fine American glass making from almost every famous American factory, for the demand for bitters containers was great.

Regarding indulgence in alcohol as a sin, but willing to get

the same effect from "medicine," the Victorians could imbibe bitters and still live up to their code.

Originally, bitters were legitimate stomachics or flavorings with an acid or bitter taste. Alcohol was necessary as a preservative, and the popularity of any given brand raised in proportion to the alcoholic content.

Bitters bottles come in all shapes, sizes and colors. A list of the twelve most desirable bitters bottles in order of their importance includes Traveler's (supposedly the rarest of all — only three are known to exist), Jacob's Cabin Tonic, Carey's Grecian Blend, Whitwell's temperance, S&B Napoleon Cocktail Cooley's Anti-Dyspeptic, Ben Franklin, Castilian, Landsberg's, and Blake's Tonic Bitters.

Square and rectangular bottles were most popular, but many were made in fancy contour forms, some cylindrical and oval, but only two brands of bitters dared to offer themselves in the form of flasks.

As for colors, bitters bottles were most frequently amber, but also aquamarine, clear, green, blue and puce.

Old invoices show that commission houses, liquor dealers, druggists and fish dealers all had a hand in the distribution of bitters.

Fancy form bottles included the pig, drum, globe, fish, Indian Queen, ear of corn, lighthouse, bust of Washington and the popular log cabin.

Americans had an amazing

capacity to consume medicinal nostrums. They were subjected to continual newspaper advertisement of locally popular bitters, and fortunes were made by enterprising patent medicine makers. All it took was a small outlay of capital for bottles, alcohol, caramel coloring, and any combination of roots and herbs that could be boiled into a bitter brew that would not kill even if it did not cure. Then, the product could be launched with the aid of a catchy name or a loud-voiced barker on the tail-gate of a medicine show that traveled from town to town selling the bottles for one buck each.

Printing was cheap in those days and labels could be made showing an Indian maiden or famous person, with all the ailments that could be cured in fine print. Even a president's wife, Mrs. Grover Cleveland, allowed her photogenic charms to be used on an advertising card to give "Sulphur Bitters" a boost!

Because Terre Haute was a glass-making center in earlier days, and because we had wineries, breweries and whiskey-making distilleries here, bottles bearing the city's name turn up all over the country. We also made medicines such as Jack Frost Cream and Milk's Emulsion and many others here. Local druggists had their names and addresses formed in the glass bottles and containers that held their prescriptions. Bottle collectors have a ball in this area digging and classifying their finds.

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Community Affairs File

Valley heritage

Antiques intriguing to collectors

Devout antique collectors will agree there is something almost mystic about items previously owned and cherished by other human beings for centuries. The antique object develops a personality of its own that reaches out to the true collector. It's more than intrinsic value or beauty or age. It's like an old friend.

Antiques have character, a sense of history. A book rack or bookcase conjures up a lot of questions. Where has it been all these years; who owned it or built it? Who polished it faithfully? Was it an English butler, a New England poet, an Ohio school teacher or a Hoosier bride?

Collecting antiques leads to much research. Does the reader know the difference between wooden containers called noggins, piggins and firkins? The noggin has a handle like a cup, the piffin has a stave and is used as a dipper, and the firkin is for storage.

Collecting barber's bottles is an interesting hobby. A well-equipped barber shop would have shelves full of these ornate containers for hair tonics, bay rum and lotions, so in fashion during the 1880s and into the 1890s.

Colorful glass can be collected in perfume bottles, decanters, flasks, and odd bottles of early days. The most ornate glass

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items are mistaken for fancy vases.

Barber's bottles come in many odd shapes, but all have the long neck, some with a bulge in the neck to give the barber a better grip on it as he shook the contents over his customer's head. Every customer left the shop smelling strongly of perfumes to advertise he had just had a fresh haircut and shave.

Silver glass, a curious Victorian novelty, was introduced in American homes in the 1850s and enjoyed great popularity in its day. It was made in two layers, the clear glass was blown first, then nitrate silver was blown into the hollow space between the layers through a hole in the base which was then sealed.

Because they were so lightweight, they were usually filled with fine sand or some kind of

grain, such as wheat, so they would be less apt to be tipped over.

Many silver glass items were used as vases for dried grasses and flower arrangements in Victorian homes. They continue to be a good collectible.

Another challenge for the antiques collector is the clever reproductions coming on the market. Skillfully aged to fool the novice, they fool the unwary, and new collectors learn to their sorrow that their antique is not old.

Those who are lucky enough to have curio cabinets can keep small antique clutter behind glass doors and not have to dust so often. Etageres or Victorian what-nots were designed to display bric-a-brac. Most frequently made of walnut or cherry, many were made of brass with shelves inlaid with marble or onyx.

By running one's fingers over the outside cut pattern of a glass article, one learns to feel the sharper difference between it and pressed-out copies. Because the human hand is not as accurate as a machine, there will be tiny imperfections in the pattern.

Buy which ever you like, but know the difference and don't pay higher cut-glass prices for the less expensive press-out variety out of ignorance.

Old cloudy glass sometimes does not respond to washing in

hot soap suds, strong alkaline solutions of soda left standing in the container for a week, followed by vinegar for another week. Try a strong hot soap solution in water with several spoonful of small steel (not lead) shot and shaking the container vigorously.

If the glass is for display rather than for use, the frosted appearance can be helped by applying ordinary mineral oil with a cotton ball on the end of a bent wire. Some glass won't respond to any of this. It's called "sick glass" and must be discarded. Cut your losses and pitch it. Just think of the fun you'll have on your next antique hunt!

All the construction north and west of the back of Union Hospital has been a happy hunting ground for those who enjoy shuffling around in the old city dump to see what they can find. Beer bottles abound, but the tiny, unusual medicine bottles are beautiful colors to twinkle in a kitchen or bath window. Buried in the sandy soil of that area, formerly part of the Wabash river bottom, they clean up fairly well with a lot of patience and elbow grease.

Write me about your latest "finds" and joys or problems you find in cleaning up, displaying, etc. We'll do another column if there's enough interest.

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